



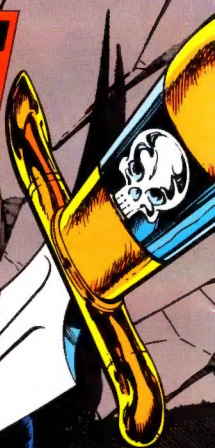
PART ONE OF THREE

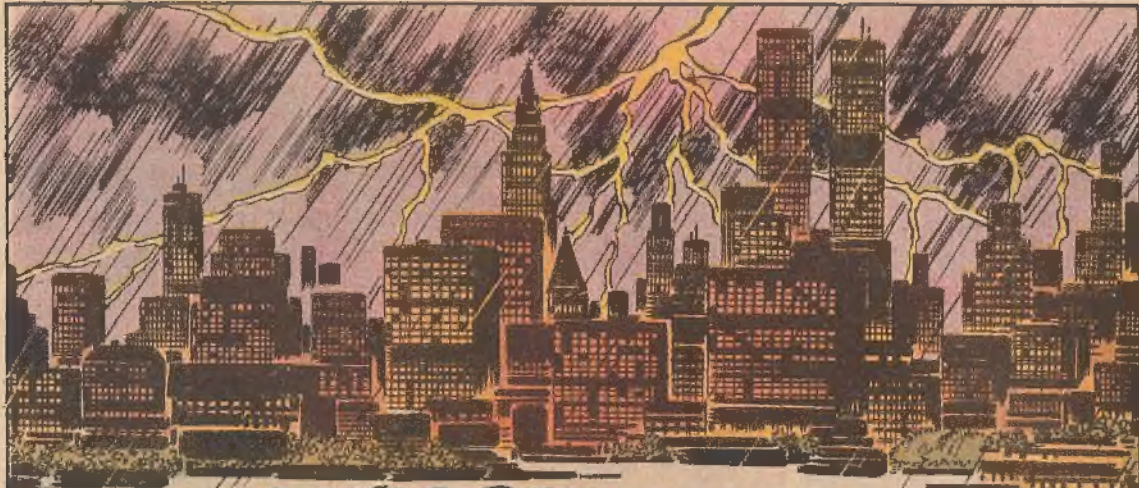
THE MANY DEATHS OF THE

BATMAN

BYRNE • APARO • DECARLO

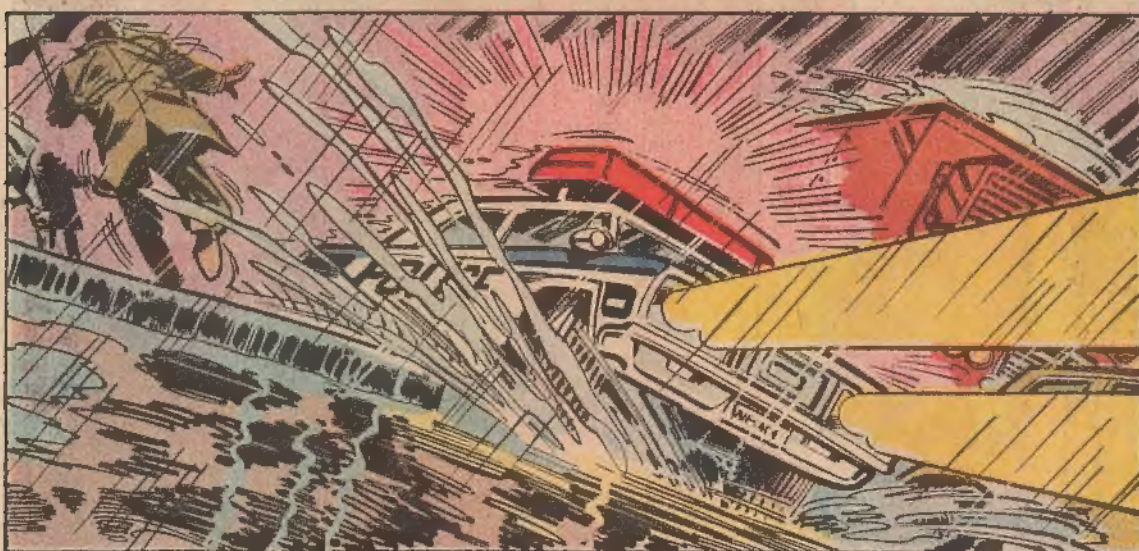
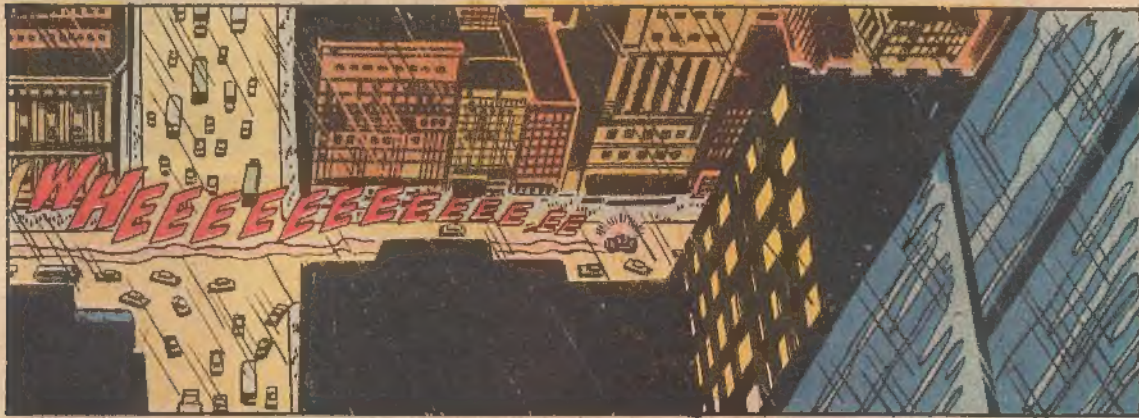
433
MAY 89
US 75¢
CAN 95¢



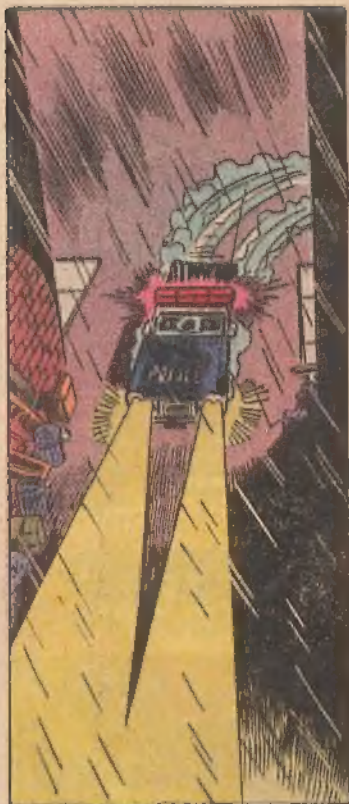


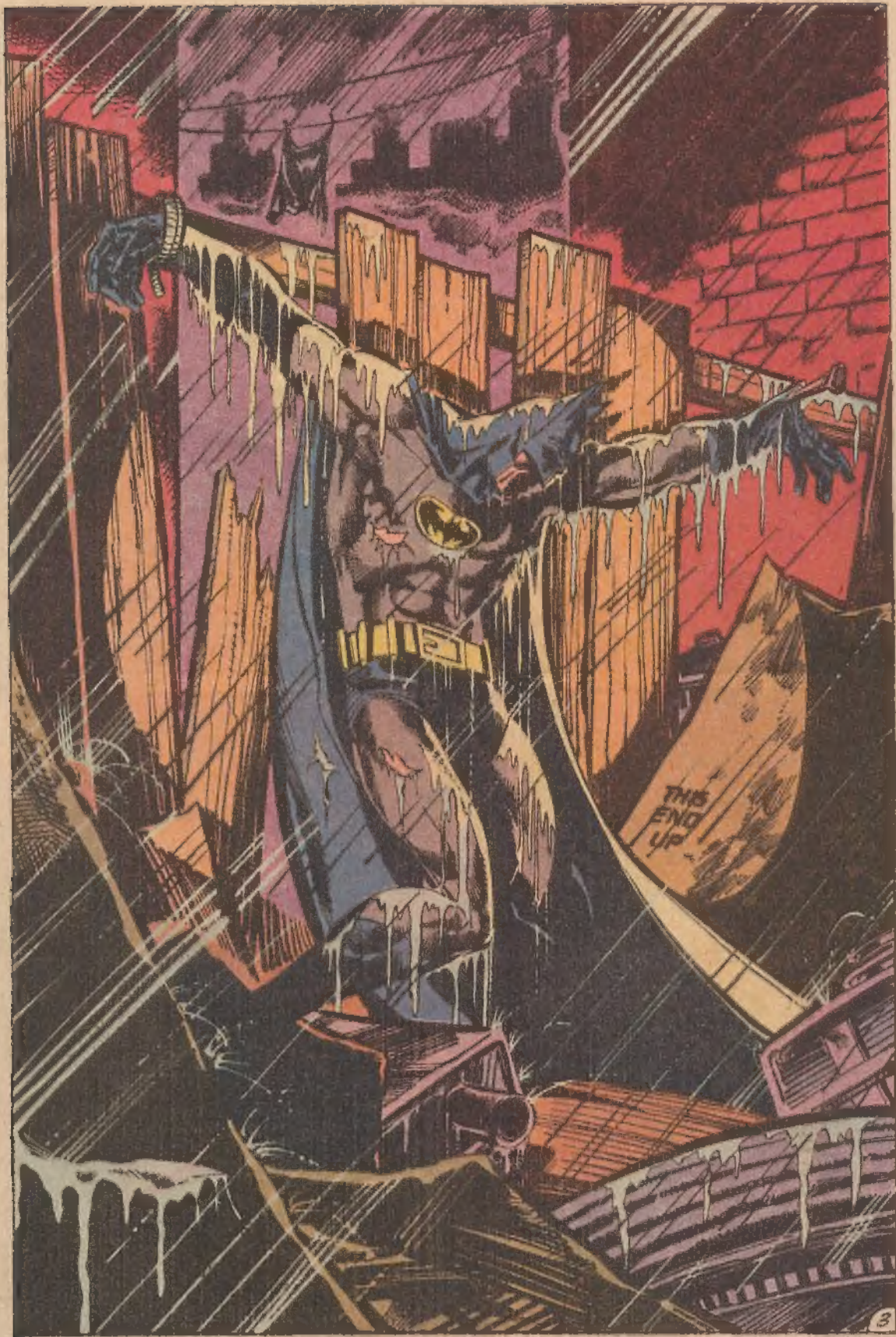
THE MANY DEATHS OF THE BATMAN

CHAPTER ONE:
PERIOD OF
MOURNING

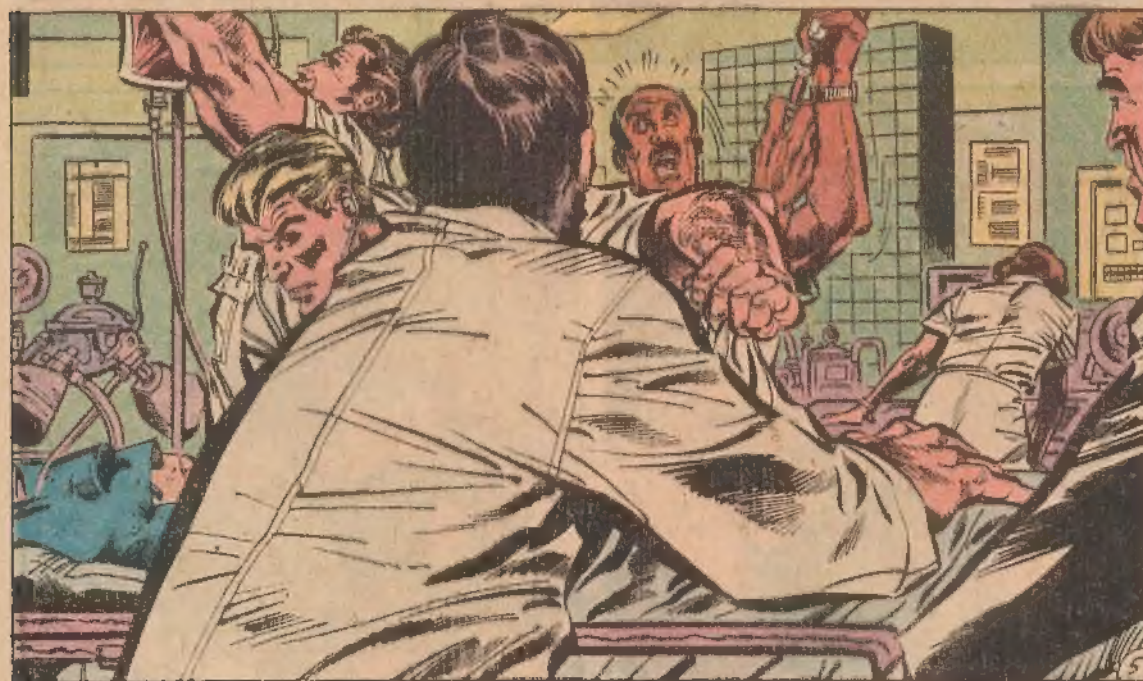
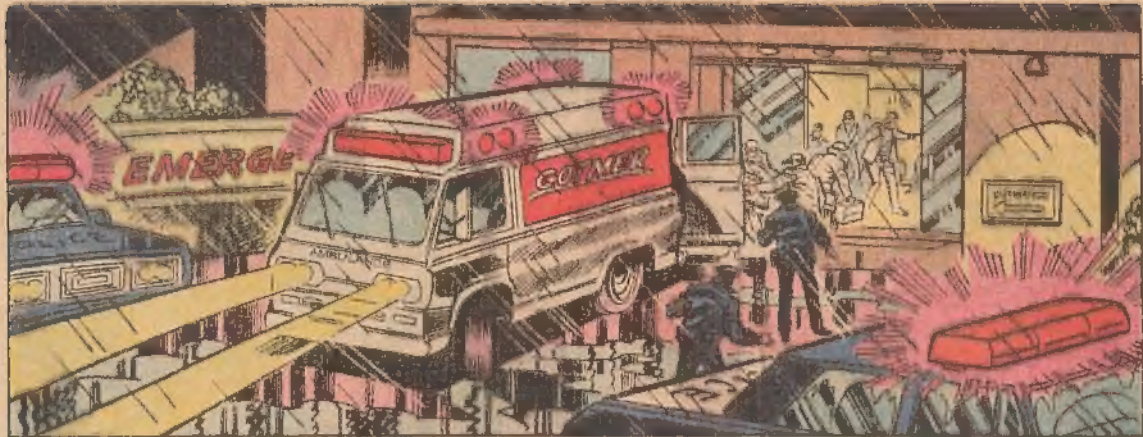


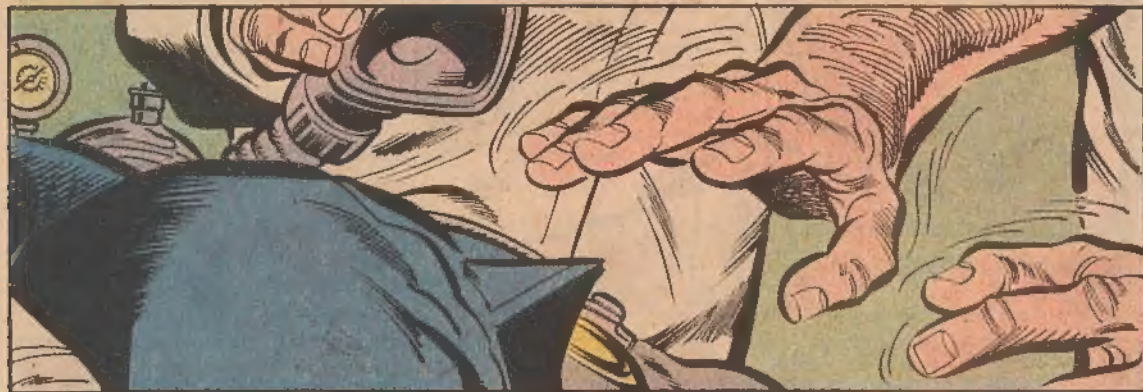
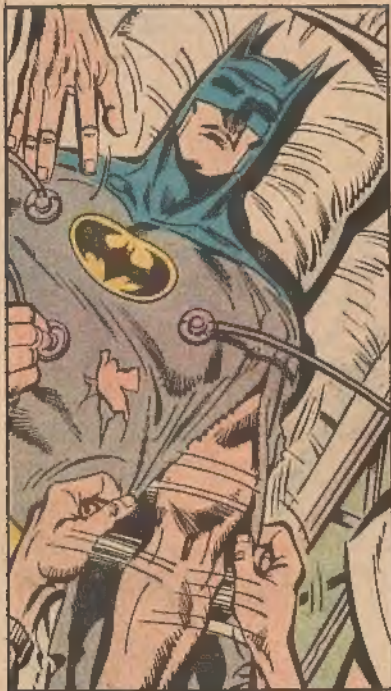
BATMAN 433 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BATMAN, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate \$9.00, Canada \$11.00, all other foreign \$19.00, U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1989 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400. Printed in U.S.A.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company 

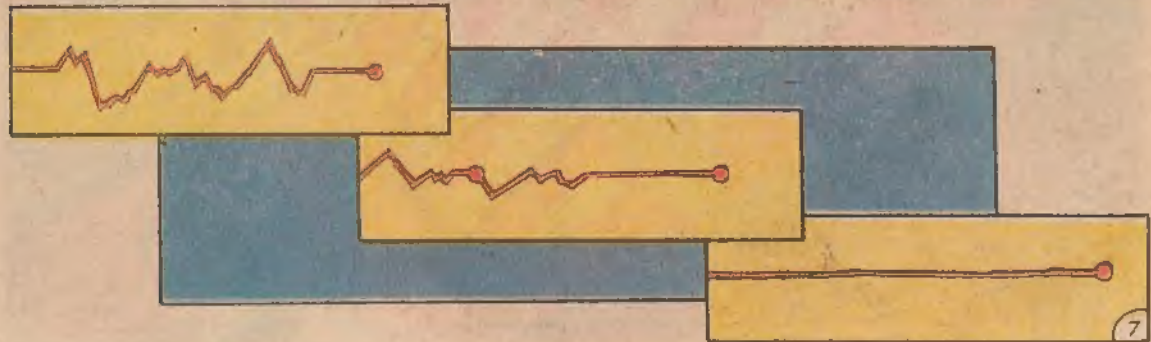
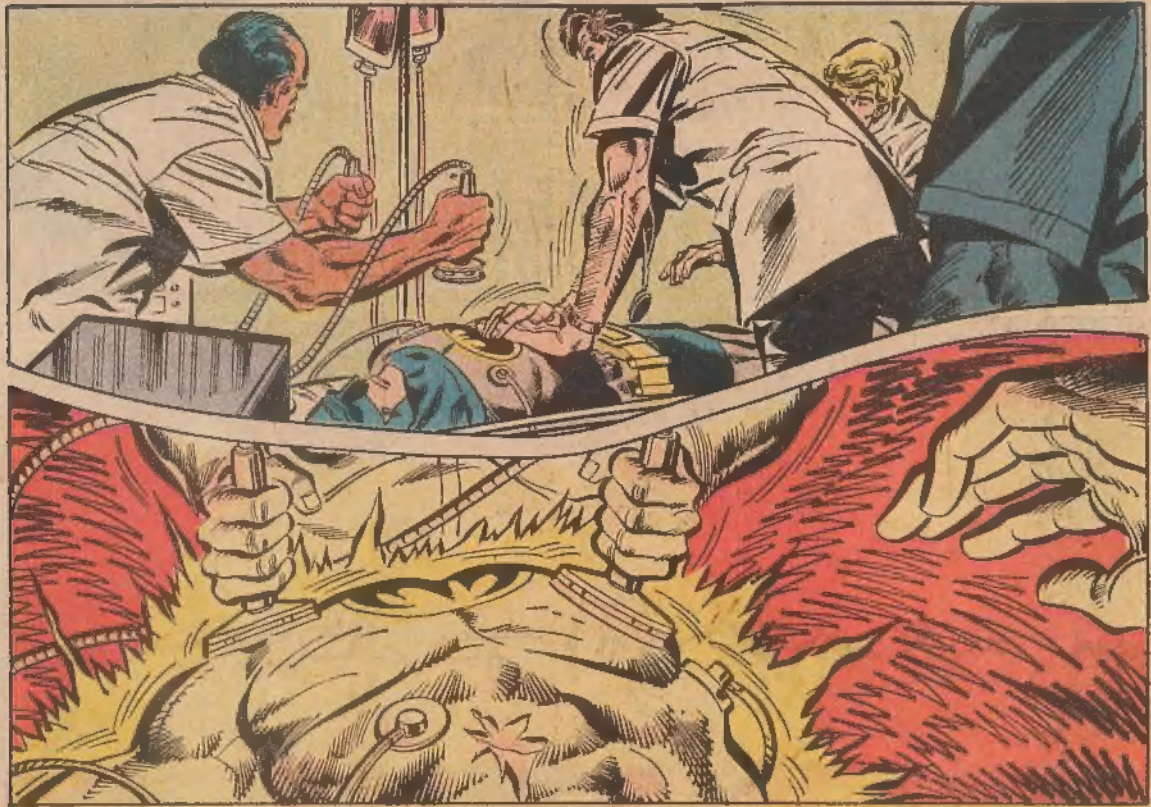
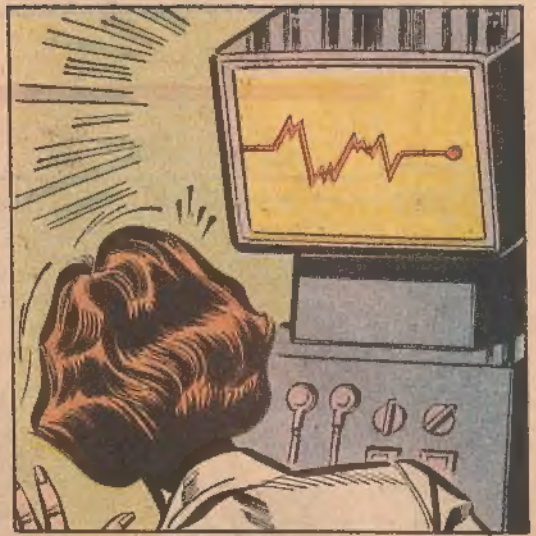
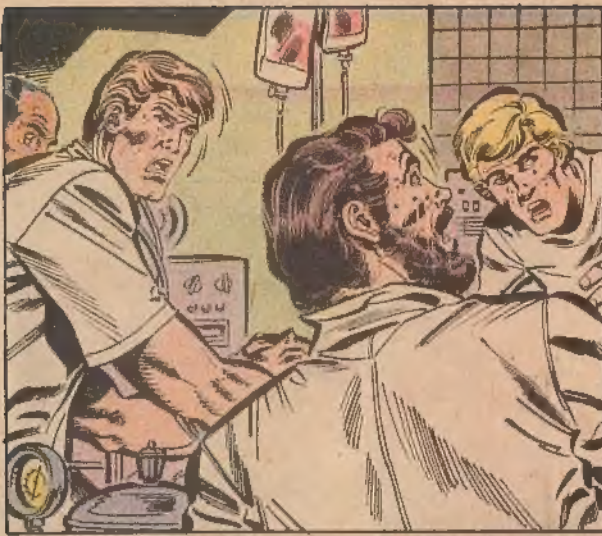


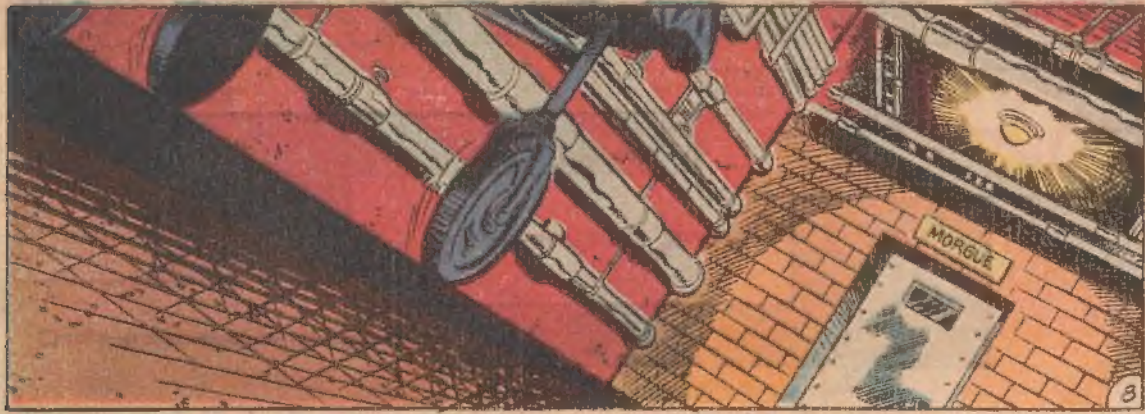
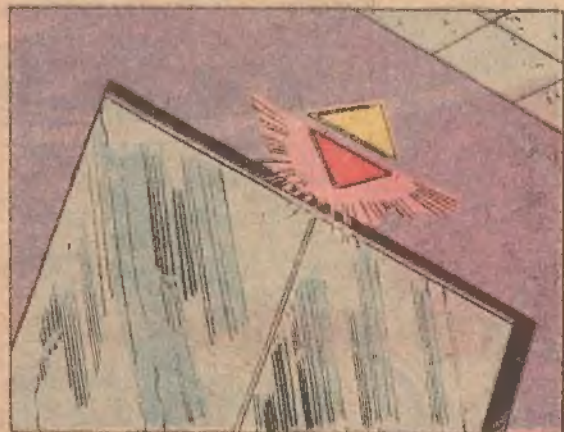
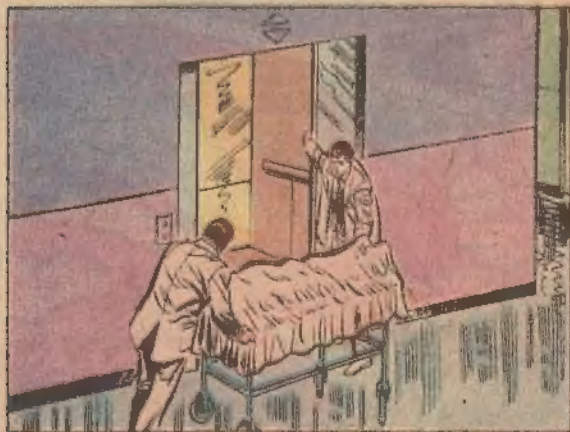
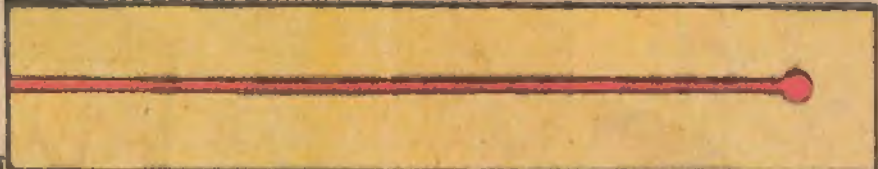


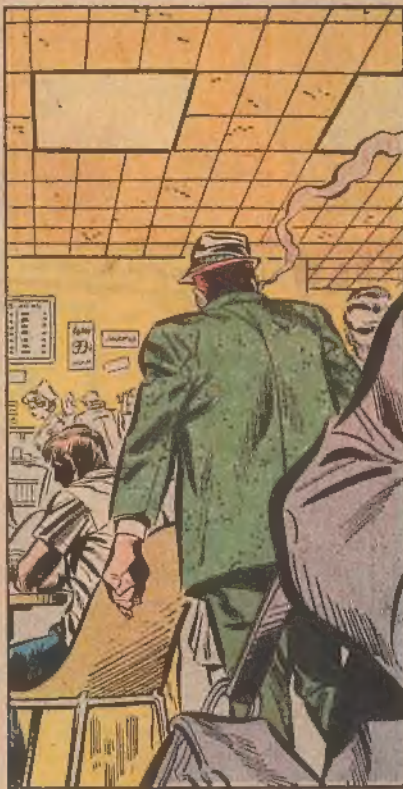




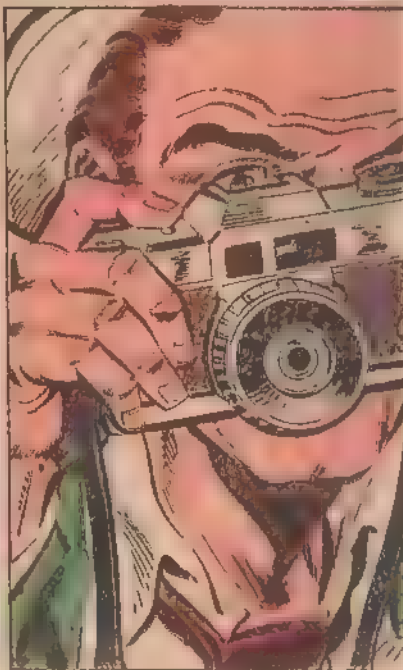
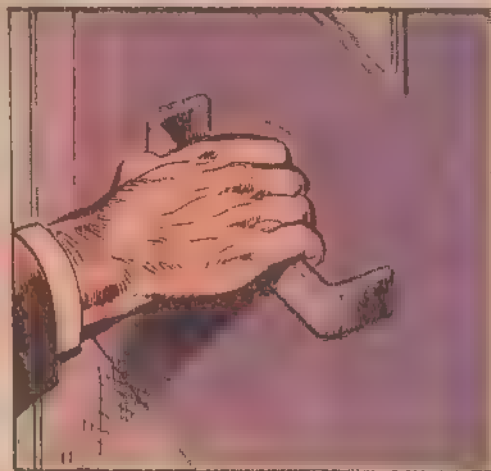


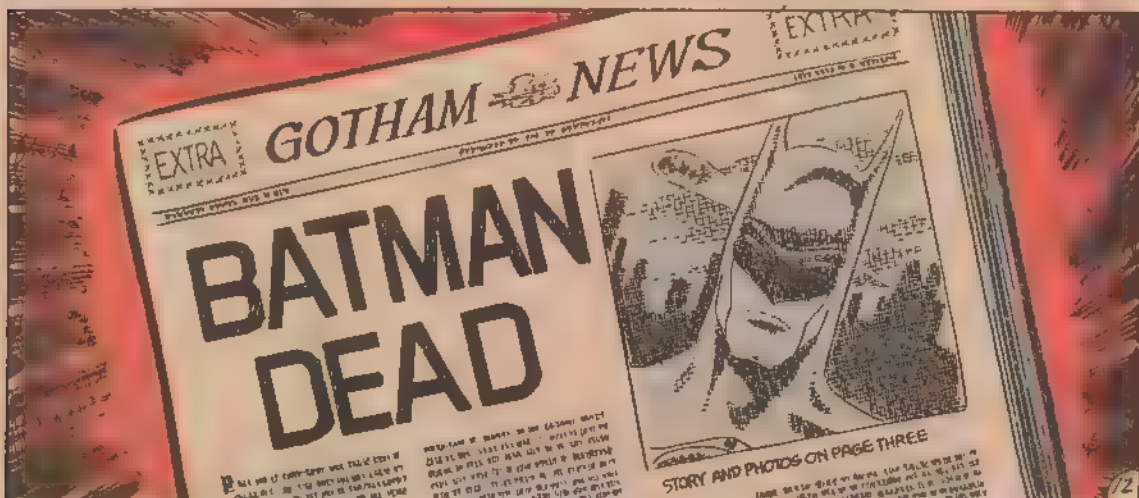


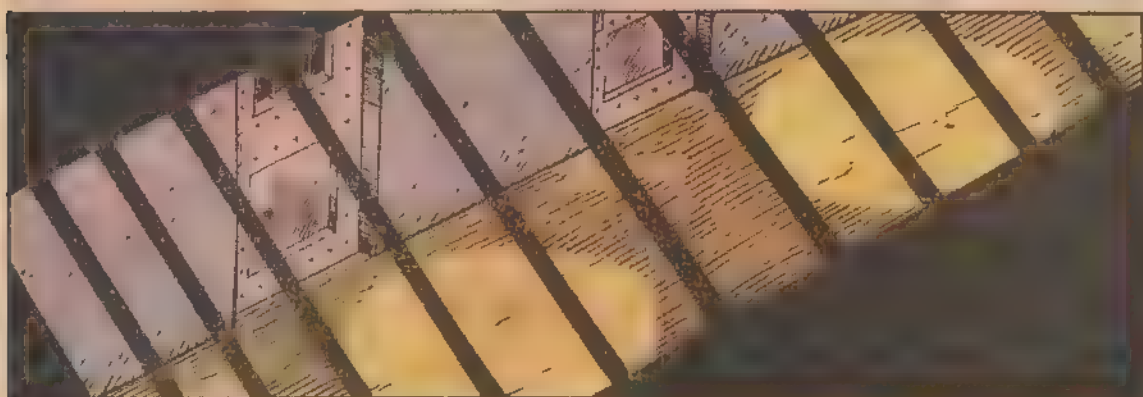


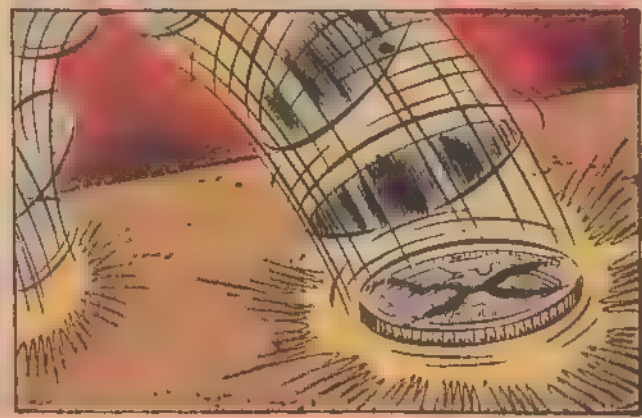






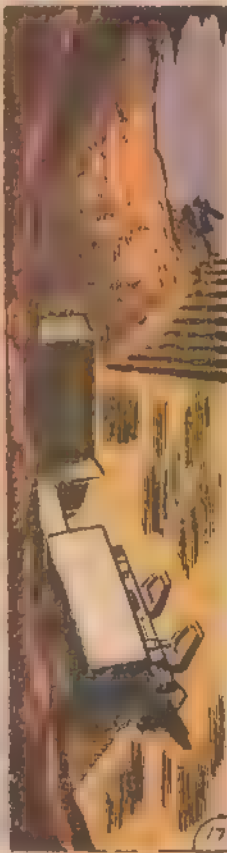




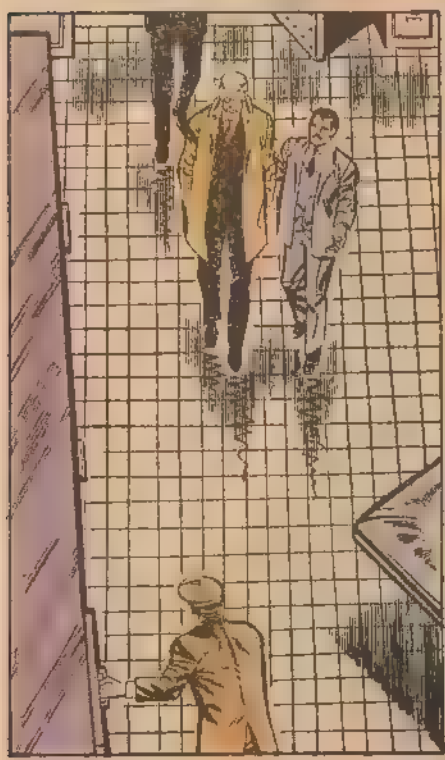
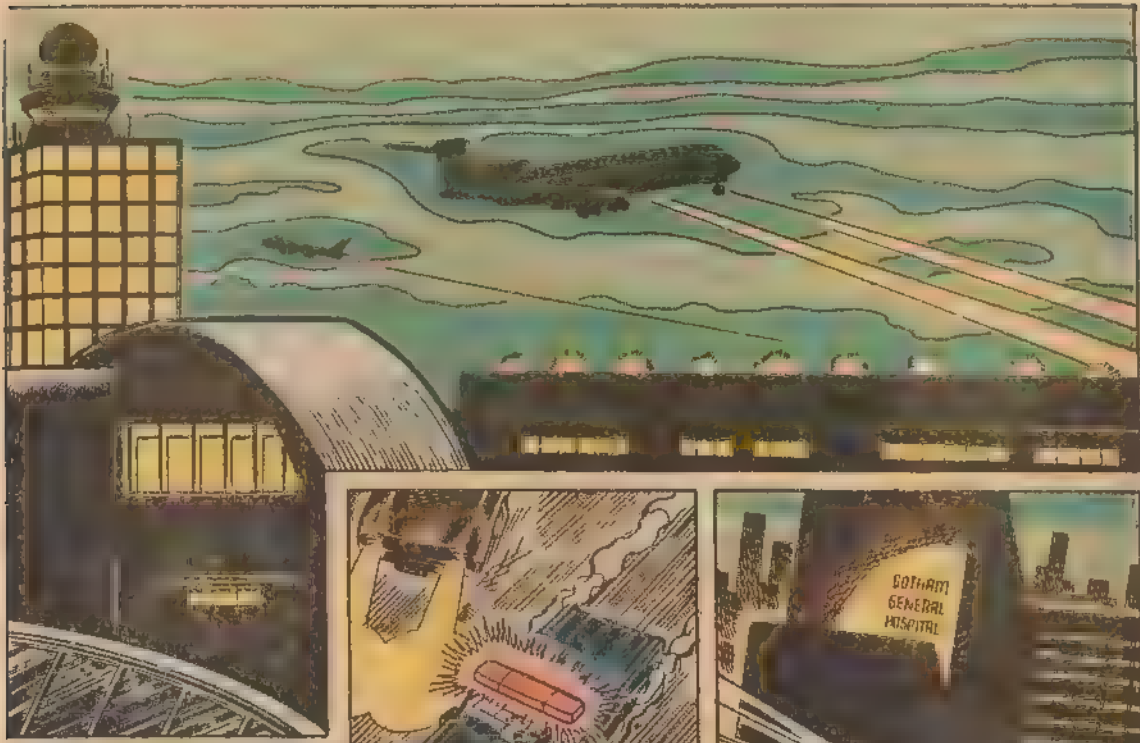


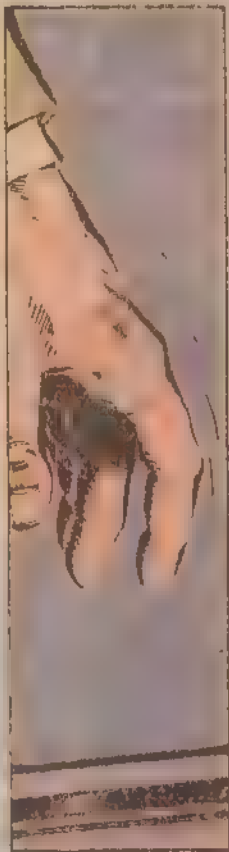


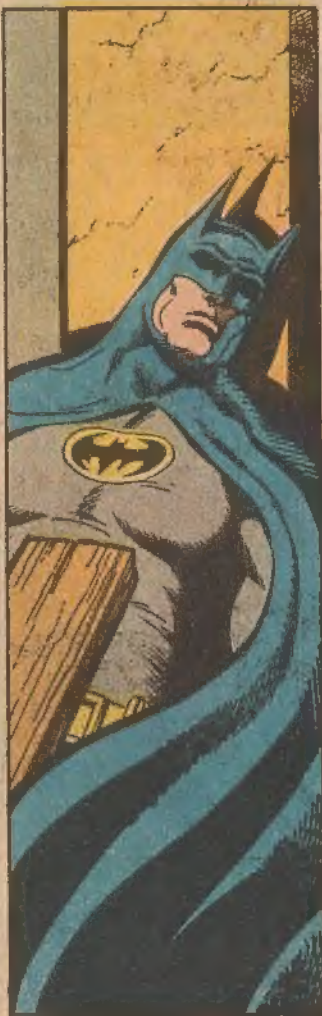
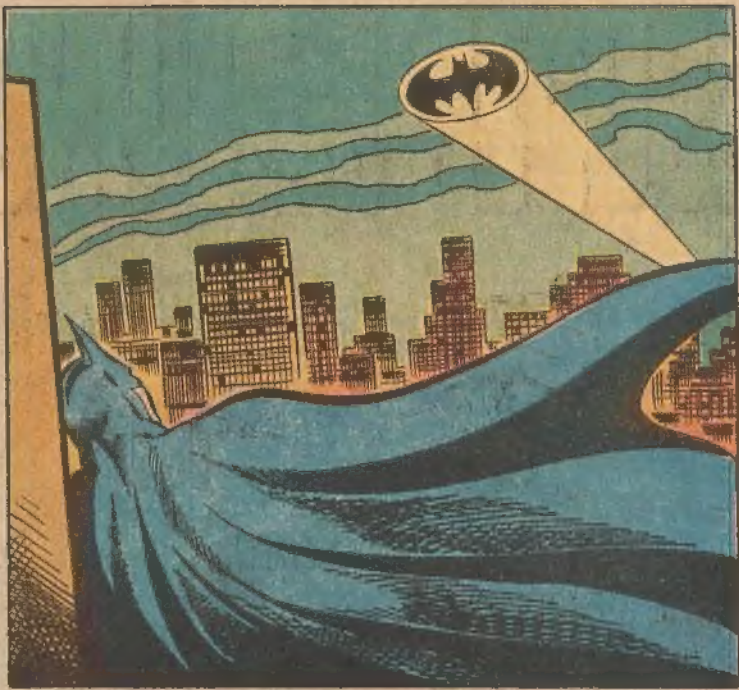


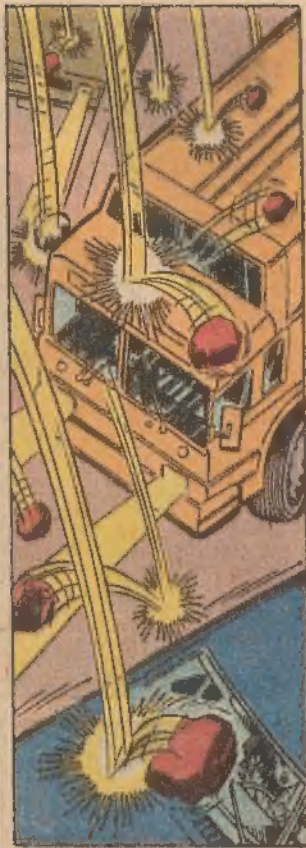












WRITTEN by JOHN BYRNE
PENCILLED by JIM APARO
INKED by MIKE DeCARLO
LETTERED by JOHN COSTANZA
COLORED by ADRIENNE ROY
ASS'T EDITOR: DAN RASPLER
EDITOR: PENNY O'NEIL
Created by BOB KANE

BAT-SIGNALS

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN President and Publisher
DICK GIORDANO V.P.-Executive Editor
DENNIS O'NEIL Editor
DAN RASPLER Asst. Editor
RICHARD BRUNING Art Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM Mgr.-Editorial Admin.
PAT BASTIENNE Mgr.-Editorial Coordinator
BOB ROZAKIS Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ Executive V.P.
JOE ORLANDO V.P.-Creative Director
BRUCE BRISTOW V.P.-Sales & Marketing
MATT RAGONE Circulation Director
PAT CALDON Controller

L-3704

For those of you who thought we made a mistake this issue and forgot to include word balloons, we didn't. Re-read it. The story is all there, it just takes a bit of work on your part to fill in the "silent dialogue."

On with the show...

Dear Crew,

I was stunned by BATMAN #430, "Fatal Wish." Like the dark figure that filled the final page of this superb story, I was silent and pensive.

Over the years, the Dark Knight has become comicdom's most interesting figure. He has been a life of sharp contrasts. "Fatal Wish" gave me the opportunity to contemplate fully this dark persona. The story provided no answers. Instead, it opened the paths for the reader to seek out those answers.

"Fatal Wish" was a rarity. Of the 132 panels in the story, 63—almost half—were without dialogue or narrative. I have noticed that the Japanese comics use this technique a great deal, leaving the reader to images and the thoughts they may provoke. Properly situated within a story and sensitively created by the artistic team, these thought-provoking panels add power to the story.

The team of Jim Aparo, Mike DeCarlo, and Adrienne Roy handled the challenge of this story masterfully. Even the lettering by John Costanza added to the depth of this story. Jim Starlin is to be commended for fashioning a tale that makes such good use of the talents of the full crew as well as utilizing the imagination and depth of the reader.

For 19 pages the reader was taken on a journey through the gloomy canyons of our tragic but heroic knight, his target a psychopathic killer with five bodies to his count. A most fitting mark, perhaps, upon which to vent the pain and rage that has plagued our hero, our dark hero.

And in the end, the reader is left with more pain. Only it was the pain of our hero over the life he tried but failed to save—the life of that same killer—his prey.

Go figure.

Gratefully yours,
Jan C. Childress
82 Pierrepont Street
Brooklyn, NY 11202

On behalf of our creators, Jan, thanks for writing.

Dear DC,

What was going through the Bat-

man's mind when he wanted to save the sniper's life in issue #430? How dare he feel compassion for a murderer who has destroyed five lives and most possibly the families of those people, not to mention the three wounded who will live with emotional complications for the rest of their lives? There is no excuse for premeditated murder, and in no way should the murderer be allowed to live. Batman should have pushed the killer off first for a more painful death, rather than try to save his life. Batman is getting soft ever since Starlin took over the writing (though I admit these are the best stories ever written in comics, period).

Starlin proved that Batman was a hypocrite with his attitude toward murder as it is proven with Robin's death. Only when someone close to the Batman died did he feel he should stop the Joker personally. What about the dozens of other people the Joker killed? Apparently, those deaths were not important enough to the Batman for him to finally come to his senses. How dare he continue his operations knowing that the only thing that will drive him to kill killers is when someone he loves is killed?

By the way, Bruce's father didn't hit Bruce hard enough.

Where's the editor?

John O'Fletcher
24 Creekside Drive
Rochester, NY 14622

The editor spends his time trying to maintain the same spirit and tone in BATMAN and DETECTIVE COMICS that has been making Batman the most popular character in the history of comics. If you've read more than a handful of BATMAN stories, you've seen that while Batman doesn't always obey each and every law in Gotham City, he does not indiscriminately dispense capital punishment. He does not cross that line.

Dear Bat-Signals,

I'd just like to say that I really love Jim Starlin's story, "Fatal Wish," in BATMAN #430. It was absolutely magnificent! As for the fatal wish, having everyone dead—or Batman's, of having his father dead—it was very well handled.

Many people feel that if a criminal has killed people, the problem could be solved by killing the criminal. I very much disagree with this line of thought.

Capital punishment solves nothing. The criminal must learn a lesson. He or

she must be treated, and must learn that what they have done is wrong.

At times we all wish the world revolved around us. It doesn't.

Wilson Aguilar
c/o CBI Club
5307 West 22nd Place
Cicero, IL 60650

Dear DC Comics,

When I was four years old I saw my first Batman and Robin show. I loved it. Then I pretended I was Robin one Halloween. It was the first super-hero I was.

I am very, very sad that you made Robin die. I have been crying for a whole day. Why did you make him die? That's what I can't figure out!

He was a hero. You don't kill heroes, you save them!

Please change your comic book!

Jenna Loughlin
Age 8
(No address given)

P.S. Please Answer!

I'm sorry, Jenna, but we just can't change the story. Robin died in "A Death in the Family" for many reasons. He didn't listen to Batman when Batman told him to wait. He was captured by the Joker and he threw himself in front of the Joker's bomb hoping to shield his mother from the blast, even though she lied to him and betrayed him. I'm also sad that Robin died in "A Death in the Family," but more readers wanted him to be dead than wanted him to be alive.

Maybe if those readers thought about what they were doing to Batman when they voted to let Robin die, they might have changed their vote. Now Batman is all alone.

I'm sorry you cried for a whole day.

Dear Denny and Dan,

I have just finished reading BATMAN #430, and I feel that I, as a longtime Batman fan, am duty bound to write you.

I have followed the Starlin/Aparo Batman from the start. Jim Starlin has always been one of my favorite writers, and I have long held that Jim Aparo is THE Batman artist, so when they first teamed up on this book, I expected only good things. And I haven't been disappointed yet.

Too many writers and editors at DC these days are treating the Batman as some sort of cold, inhuman, somewhat unbalanced figure of vengeance. Jim, however, remembers that Batman is a

human being, plagued by the same worries and fears we all have. In fact, he became what he did in reaction to an all-too-human sense of anger and frustration.

"Fatal Wish" has added another dimension to the tapestry of Batman's past. I now look forward to seeing how Jim has Batman deal with Jason's death, in addition to his relationship with Dick Grayson. I'm hoping this tragedy will bring them together, not drive them further apart, as hinted by Frank Miller in DARK KNIGHT.

Again, thank you for giving us one of the best books around today.

Sincerely,
Jon Keyes

(No address given)

Jon, I agree that it's a little too easy to portray Batman as a one-note, cold-blooded, miserably obsessive vigilante. He's not. The more you read of him, the more you realize that there's a lot more to the Caped Crusader than the cowl, the Bat-signal, and the utility belt. He's a very well-defined PERSONALITY, something quite rare in the all-too-often character-simple world of comics.

Thanks for writing.

Next issue we'll be continuing "The Many Deaths of the Batman" storyline by JOHN BYRNE, JIM APARO and MIKE DeCARLO. And this time, we'll have words in the story. I promise! That story will conclude with the explosive BAT-MAN #435.

And check out this space next month for information on what the Dark Night Detective will be up to this summer.

Take care.

—Assistant Editor
Dan Raspler

From the Den

Here is what I know about the guy: He's a sports fan. (We've discussed the World Series, the Superbowl, and a couple of fights.)

He read comics as a kid, and maintained a lively interest in the form.

He lives in San Francisco. (High marks for that; San Francisco is my favorite American city.)

He once lived in Brooklyn.

He did the script for a small, vastly underrated movie titled *Never Cry Wolf*.

He works on a computer equipped with a fax machine.

He writes extremely well, and his words reveal a dramatic imagination, humor and, occasionally, a witty and refreshing sense of self-deprecation.

He is an honorable man.

But:

Short or tall? Fat or thin? White or black or Asian? (Green?) Married or single? Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, atheist, agnostic, Zoroastrian, Hindu, Taoist or Something Else Entirely? Bald or bushy?

Ph.D or high school dropout? Liberal or conservative? Old or young or in between?

Actually, I can guess at some of the answers, but I've never even been on the same coast with Sam Hamm, much less in the same room, so I can't be sure of anything he hasn't told me on the phone. I became aware of him when I read the first draft of the forthcoming Batman movie, which he'd written. I first spoke to him after I'd heard through the grapevine (I forget exactly which grapevine) that he might be interested in doing a comic book script. This was during the writers strike—The Writers Guild of America refused to work for film or television producers for five months last summer, you may remember—and I thought, what the heck, the guy probably has time to kill and that first draft movie script was one of the best Batman stories I'd ever read. What could I lose by talking? I phoned, we chatted, and not only was he interested, he had what sounded like an idea that would be perfect for the six hundredth issue of *Detective*—the issue that, coincidentally, marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of Batman's debut. We agreed on some details, had

a few more transcontinental conversations and finally decided, with Dick Giordano's blessing, that we'd do the story in three parts totaling 142 pages. I waited, a bit anxiously; the movie script was good, but the guy was a totally unknown quantity as a comics writer. Then Sam's pages began arriving. They were fine. I was as happy as an editor ever gets.

Then the strike ended.

And I was unhappy. I thought, the guy will do what *any* sane freelancer would do—return to his big bucks movie assignments. Which he did. But he is, as I observed a few paragraphs back, an honorable man. He managed to do his film stuff and the three-part Batman story. Often, the deadlines were only a tick or two away, but thanks to a reliable overnight delivery company and, at the end, his fax machine, he never blew them.

As I write this, I haven't spoken to Sam in over a month. Our professional association has ended. Too bad. He was always pleasant and usually funny, and in an odd way, I feel I know him—at least, as well as one can know a person who is a complete stranger.

DEANU



ONLY THE NAME IS
THE SAME

FIRESTORM

DON'T ASSUME HE'S MANKIND'S FRIEND

FIRESTORM 86, on sale in May

By John Ostrander & Tom Mandrake

DC